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Published in:

Abstract book - 6th NOVO Symposium: Sustainable Health Care: Continuous Improvement of Processes and Systems

Publication date:

2012

Document Version

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link back to DTU Orbit](#)

Citation (APA):

Edwards, K., & Winkel, J. (2012). Previous experiences of Value Stream Mapping (VSM) at the hospital units included in the Danish part of the NOVO Multicenter Study. In *Abstract book - 6th NOVO Symposium: Sustainable Health Care: Continuous Improvement of Processes and Systems* (pp. 60-60)

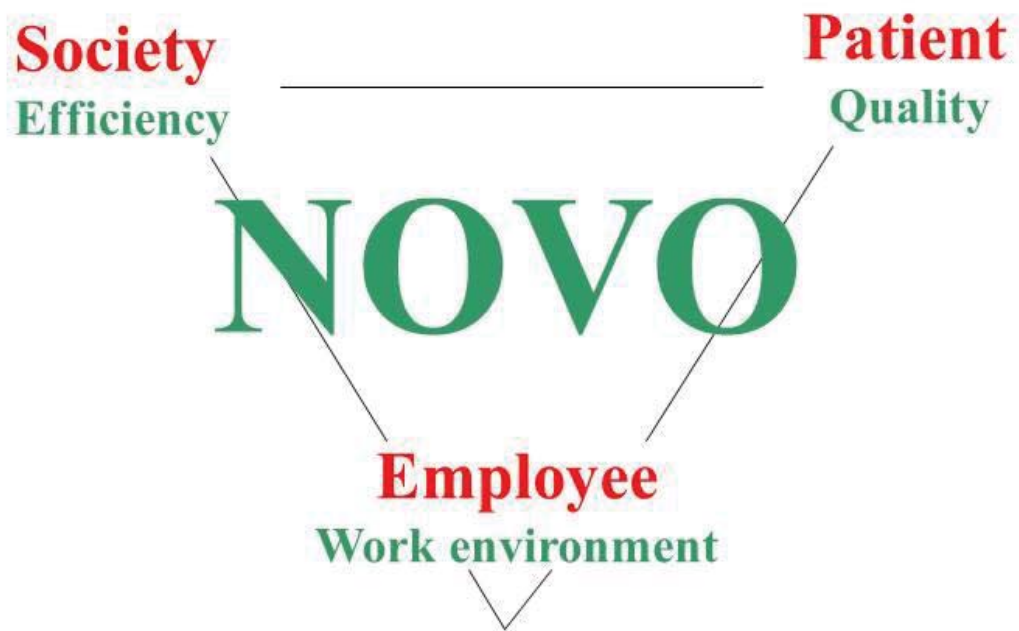
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6th NOVO Symposium



Stockholm, 15-16 November 2012



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Previous experiences of Value Stream Mapping (VSM) at the hospital units included in the Danish part of the NOVO Multicenter Study

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The rationalization strategy Lean Production (“Lean”) was first introduced at a Danish hospital in 2004. The development of healthcare in Denmark has since then to an increasing extent been based on ideas and principles of Lean production although there has never been government Lean strategy. There is however signs that Lean will become the dominating strategy as the Danish Capital Region decided in 2011 to use Lean as the general rationalization approach at all their hospitals. A variety of Lean approaches, including top-down as well as bottom-up practices, have been used in different parts of the country.

The Danish hospital units included in the present NOVO Multicenter Study are part of the Odense University Hospital (OUH). This is a regional hospital with more than 10.000 employees. OUH has applied Lean principles including Value Stream Mapping (VSM) since early 2006 using a top-down approach driven by the hospital management. A central Lean department was established at OUH and it was decided that the saved resources obtained by VSM and subsequent reorganization should imply gains for both the hospital and the individual employee (ward) on a “50/50-basis”.

After 2010 OUH changed to a “pull strategy” meaning that each ward is responsible for contacting the Lean department if they want to reorganize one or more of their processes. Thus, more emphasis is now put on “bottom-up” initiatives. Since then the number of projects has increased but the scope of projects is narrower compared to the early top-down lean projects. The Lean department has developed a concept for implementing Lean at OUH. The Lean department supply tools and project management to the wards in order to facilitate problem solving and implementation of solutions.

It is presumed that the above presented history of Lean introduction at OUH explains the general awareness of Lean, expectation of what it may offer and how it is implemented. Lean has become institutionalized at OUH and Lean projects seem generally to be associated with improvement of the work.

Conclusion

The organization of the Lean processes seems to be well established in the system and also accepted by most of the employees.